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Miss Skinner's Marathon

By AMELIA YOUNG

Star Staff Writer

After her two-hour marathon performance at Lisner Auditorium last night, Cornelia Otis Skinner kept on going.

The 61-year-old actress and author starred at a black-tie supper, given by Mr. and Mrs. John A. Logan at Firenze House, and stayed up till early this morning greeting old friends and meeting long-time admirers.

Whisked to the dining room as soon as she arrived (she never eats before going on stage), Miss Skinner was locked there for more than an hour as the Logans' guests took turns in the chairs around her.

Benefit Program

The celebrated monologist had presented "The Wives of Henry VIII," also three "Modern Monologues," in a benefit program for the National Society of Arts and Letters. Addressing herself to a full house, with only a few props and costumes for support, she delivered about 20 character sketches all of her own creation in an awesome display of stamina.

Asked at the party how she feels at the end of such a stint, she said, "Very keen to do something like this--and then I want to die."

She has no trouble meeting the demands of acting, writing and touring (and certain civic projects), she added smiling, "because of all the things I don't do. For example, I don't play bridge, and I never join women's committees."

More Old Friends

Miss Skinner's supper companions included Mr. and Mrs. H. Gates Lloyd, friends of the actress, and the Australian Ambassador and Lady Beale. The latter met her when she toured their country with Cyril Ritchard in "The Pleasure of His Company" two years ago, and experience

that left her delighted with the Australians.

Among those who dropped by later were Mrs. Perle Mesta, Mrs. Paul B. Magnuson, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick B. Lee and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Casey, also old friends.

Other guests at the party were Senator Karl Mundt, former Speaker of the House Joe Martin, the President's Naval Aide and Mrs. Tazewell T. Shepard, jr.; Gen. and Mrs. Charles P. Cabell, Mr. and Mrs. Myron Cowen, Mr. and Mrs. Eric Johnston, Mrs. Estes Kefauver, Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Becker and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Dennis.

Mrs. George Tillman Bell, jr., president of the National Society of Arts and Letters, also attended, accompanied by her husband.

Guest of the Mays

Miss Skinner was dressed in her costume from the first act, a sumptuous gold brocade dinner suit with mink collar. She received in the hallway for a time after a supper, then returned to nearby Hillwood where she stayed overnight as the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert May.

Last night's benefit was the national society's most ambitious since its founding in 1944. Each year, to raise money for its scholarship fund, the organization presents a program on one of the arts. The scholarships are awarded by competition to young talents in ballet, drama, literature, music and art.

Board Member

Mrs. Logan, a member of the society's board, and her husband took a group to the theater, as did the Lloyds, Mrs. McCook Knox, the Cowens, the Caseys, Mr. and Mrs. Garvin Tankersley and Mr. and Mrs. Blake Clarke.

Architect Edward Durrell Stone attended the performance, also Director of the Mint Eva Adams, who entertained the benefit chairman,

Mrs. Paul H. Hatch, and her husband beforehand, and Mr. and Mrs. Hugh D. Auchincloss.

If diligent supporters of the arts made the benefit a success, they got some help from rank-and-file fans of Miss Skinner, who didn't bother to dress for the occasion, they just turned out. One woman who came alone, kerchief around her head, sighed as she was leaving, "Oh, I could have watched another two hours."